AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

The changes in the following paragraphs from their immediate prior version are shown with ~~strikethrough~~ or [[double brackets]] for deleted matter and <u>underlines</u> for added information.

Please amend the paragraph on page 25, lines 15 to 27, as follows:

A single disk spring like a coil spring has a rate, which is dependent on deflection and load. These disk springs, unlike coil springs, can be arranged in a quite unique manner that allows both parallel and series combinations to be achieved in a vertical column. To explain this it is best to look at the simple case, which involves only two disks springs. If both disks are stacked with the same orientation we find that the rate has increased by two. This is an example of parallel stacking. If the disks are stacked facing in opposite directions we find that the rate has been reduced by half, this would be an example of a series stack. This series and parallel stacking works for any number of disks. If we look at more than just two springs we quickly find that there are many more different ~~combination~~ <u>combinations</u> possible. This allows for one size disk spring to be used in multiple column arraignments, which have many different rates.

Please amend the paragraph on page 30, line 18 to page 31, line 7, as follows:

FIGURES 10 and 11 illustrate additional preferred embodiments of this invention. Reducing the wire cross sectional area produces a reduction in spring rate. This is done by machining or grinding the outside or inside of a standard spring until the desired rate is achieved. This changes the ~~springs~~ <u>spring's</u> normal round cross section to one that has a flat on one side. This may make the spring more susceptible to corrosion due to the exposed surface of the spring. Also, coil springs are heat treated when they are made so the heat generated in this operation may affect the internal stress of the spring wire. As shown in Figure 10, <u>a</u> standard wound coil spring having a rate tolerance of ±7% can readily be reduced to ±2% by removal of metal from the outside diameter of the spring. For example, if a set spring was required to have a spring rate of 100 lbs/in. ±2%, a coil spring would be procured having a design rate of 107 lbs/in. Then, the spring lot would be carefully measured to determine the statistically accurate mean rate. Note that the actual variation of spring rates within a batch of springs wound at the same time is small, perhaps a ±2% variation. However,

the next batch of springs wound with a different batch of spring wire and a slightly different spring winding machine set up would produce as much as a ±7% variation from the nominal of 107 lbs/in. rate. The statistical mean is then used as a reference to drop the rate of the batch of springs. If each of the springs of the initial batch is within the small ±2% then the modified springs should still be within ±2% of each other but at a new lower mean rate.